PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

In this issue:

Good Faith Day's Supply Edit, Plan B 1
Salbutamol Inhalers Containing CFCs 1
Subscription Service Now Available 1
LCA Updates 2
Claims for Compounded Preparations 2
Antivirus Software Strongly Recommended 2
Benefits 3

This newsletter provides information on the Pharmacare program for British Columbia's community pharmacists. Please circulate among dispensing staff.

Pharmacare on the Web:
www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/pharme

Good Faith Day's Supply Edit, Plan B

As Plan B prescriptions are supplied in an environment in which inappropriate early fills are unlikely, effective January 23, 2003, the Good Faith Days' Supply edit is no longer being applied to Plan B claims.

Salbutamol Inhalers Containing CFCs

As of January 1, 2003, the federal government no longer permits drug companies to sell salbutamol inhalers containing CFC propellants, which are harmful to the atmosphere. Alternative, CFC-free, products are already available. Salbutamol products containing CFC propellants are no longer eligible for Pharmacare coverage.

The following CFC-free salbutamol inhalers are available under the Pharmacare Low Cost Alternative Program:

- 02245669 Apo-Salvent CFC Free Aer inh
- 02244914 Ratio-Salbutamol HFA Aer inh
- 02232570 Airomir Aer inh

Please note: GlaxoSmithKline has not applied to Pharmacare for coverage of Ventolin® HFA (DIN 2241497). Instead, GSK has submitted an application for a generic version.

Subscription Service Now Available

An e-mail subscription service is now available for pharmacies and stakeholders who would like to be notified when a new Pharmacare Newsletter or PharmaNet Bulletin is posted on our Web site. Through the subscription service, you can also elect to receive notification of alerts regarding PharmaNet system issues or incidents in your geographical area.

To subscribe, please visit the Pharmacare Web Site at: www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/pharme.

It is our intention to discontinue distribution of Pharmacare Newsletters and PharmaNet Bulletins by mail as of April 1, 2003.

LCA Updates

An update to the October 15, 2002 LCA/RDP Booklet is available on the Pharmacare Web site. *Version 1.1 January 15, 2003* includes updates such as new categories and new products added to existing categories. It is NOT a new booklet.

Claims for Compounded Preparations

The following information relates to Pharmacare claims for compounded preparations in situations in which the regular medication(s) is a normal benefit or the patient has been granted Pharmacare Special Authority (SA).

Not all specially compounded preparations are eligible for Pharmacare coverage. When a physician or patient prefers a different dosage strength or form than is commercially available, other alternatives in the same therapeutic class may be available. If a specially compounded preparation is still preferred, the compounding pharmacy must provide Pharmacare with details of the cost and amount of the individual ingredients, labour costs and the time required to compound. If the cost is excessive, the request for coverage may be denied.

If the compound is approved, an SA will be provided for a compound PIN specific for that patient. Regular PINS are not to be used for this purpose.

When submitting an SA request for a specially compounded preparation, physicians should provide the name of the compounding pharmacy enabling Pharmacare to contact the pharmacy directly.

Antivirus Software Strongly Recommended

Over the past few weeks, several viruses have infected pharmacy computer systems. These infections can result in local computer system outages which can lead to the loss of local business functions and of the ability to transmit prescriptions electronically to PharmaNet and Third Party Adjudicators.

All pharmacies in British Columbia, through the connection to PharmaNet, have access to the Internet and therefore are at risk of virus infection. In addition, diskettes or CD ROMs can contain viruses. Antivirus software with up-to-date virus definitions is the easiest way to reduce or eliminate this risk.

Good Antivirus software includes "real-time scanning" for viruses so that files read by the computer, including those read from diskettes, CD ROMs, hard drives, network resources and the Internet, are automatically scanned for viruses without the need for user intervention. In addition, some Antivirus software can be configured to scan incoming and outgoing email messages.

It is strongly recommended that all pharmacies install up-to-date Antivirus software on their local computer systems. Commercial versions of Antivirus software typically receive updated virus definition files weekly. Pharmacy Managers should discuss Antivirus software solutions with their computer support organization or software support organization (SSO).

Benefits

The following new products have been included as eligible Pharmacare benefits on Plans A, B, C, E and F:

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	Short Term	Long Term	Plan G Eligible	Palliative Care Eligible
2247011	APX	Apo-Simvastatin Tab 5mg	N	Y	N	N
2247012	APX	Apo-Simvastatin Tab 10mg	N	Y	N	N
2247013	APX	Apo-Simvastatin Tab 20mg	N	Y	N	N
2247014	APX	Apo-Simvastatin Tab 40mg	N	Y	N	N
2247015	APX	Apo-Simvastatin Tab 80mg	N	Y	N	N
2245663	APX	Apo-Trimebutine Tab 100mg	N	Y	N	N
2245664	APX	Apo-Trimebutine Tab 200mg	N	Y	N	N
2246582	GPM	Gen-Simvastatin Tab 5mg	N	Y	N	N
2246583	GPM	Gen-Simvastatin Tab 10mg	N	Y	N	N
2246737	GPM	Gen-Simvastatin Tab 20mg	N	Y	N	N
2246584	GPM	Gen-Simvastatin Tab 40mg	N	Y	N	N
2246585	GPM	Gen-Simvastatin Tab 80mg	N	Y	N	N

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following new products under the Low Cost Alternative Program (LCA) / Reference Drug program (RDP) have been included as eligible Pharmacare benefits on Plans A, B, C, E & F:

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	FULL/ PARTIAL	LCA/RDP Price	Short Term	Long Term	Plan G Eligible	Eligible for Palliative Care
2244474	PMS	Pms-Clobazam Tab 10mg	P	$0.2503	N	Y	N	Y
2245758	PMS	Pms-Oxycodone-Acetaminophen Tab 5mg/325mg	P	$0.1027	Y	N	N	Y

Limited Coverage Drugs

The following new products have been included as eligible Pharmacare benefits, under the Limited Coverage program on Plans A, B, C, E & F by special authority only (please refer to Website for criteria)

DIN	MAN	Brand Name	Short Term	Long Term
2246534	RAM	Ratio-Zopiclone Tab 5mg	Y	N